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New Directions for TCDC to be debated by High-Level Committee

From 30 May to 2 June, the ninth session of the High-Level Committee on the review of TCDC, which reports to the General Assembly, will meet in New York to review new directions and priority areas for TCDC. While still regarded as a valid and much needed programme concept, it has become necessary to ensure that TCDC remains relevant to the changing needs of developing countries as they strive to adapt to changing international economic conditions.

Responding to this, the UN General Assembly mandated in its resolution 49/96 that the High-level Committee, in its meeting next week, review a report prepared by UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC on proposed new directions. After a comprehensive review of the main features of TCDC as it has evolved since the Buenos Aires Plan of Action formalized its UN status in 1978, the Special Unit for TCDC prepared the report for the express purpose of presenting recommendations at the upcoming High-Level Committee meeting.

Indonesian-African technical cooperation at a training centre for Poultry Husbandry and Feed Manufacturing helps to boost food security.

A major premise of the *New Directions* report is that given the changing climate and dynamics of traditional multilateral development cooperation, TCDC and South-South cooperation are likely to assume increased importance in the future. In light of this, says Denis Benn, Director of the Special Unit for TCDC, the programme should focus on

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Speth, in Germany, calls for Aid Reform

While on a one-week visit to Europe that included stops in France, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands and Germany, UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth addressed a group of German government officials, parliamentarians, NGOs, business representatives and media on the need for reform of Official Development Assistance (ODA). Mr. Speth spoke in Bonn on 11 May, in an event co-organized by the German United Nations Association and the German Federation of Industry and Commerce.

In his address, Mr. Speth said that he was impressed by how quickly Germany had changed, and that since the Berlin Wall had come down less than five years ago, the country had reinvented itself. But the UNDP Administrator used the occasion to call for other changes, at the international level, which he said are urgently needed in the post Cold War era.

While the world has witnessed a number of remarkable successes in human development in recent years, Mr. Speth said that it is still a big place — complicated, unfair and diverse — and that desperation and devastation are the lot of most people. "Some 1.5 billion people live in poverty in

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strategic initiatives that would have major development impact on large numbers of developing countries. Priority areas, he says, must include trade and investment, debt management, environment, poverty alleviation, employment and macro-economic policy coordination.

Examples of large-scale initiatives that could benefit many countries include the Small Island Developing States Technical Assistance Programme (SIDSTAP), and the effort to link Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) and TCDC. The former is seen as especially important as it would enable TCDC to serve as a useful tool in support of broader economic cooperation schemes among developing countries.

Contained in the report are numerous valuable recommendations, including one to expand TCDC-INRES into a multi-dimensional information system with more comprehensive data on experts and centres of excellence; successful programme and project experiences that are capable of replication in other countries would also be included.

Over the years, many important accomplishments have been realized through TCDC activities. In the Asia and Pacific region, small island countries have engaged in TCDC exchanges to address such critical issues as sea level rise, tourism and environmental protection. In Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, Turkey, Poland, Cyprus and Malta have been actively involved in a range of TCDC activities, as have Egypt and Tunisia in the Arab region and Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria in Africa. In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia have taken part in TCDC programmes funded both through bilateral programmes as well as by UNDP. Of particular significance in the region have been efforts to support Central American countries in the difficult transition from conflict to development.

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UNDP's 173 programme countries," Mr. Speth said, "and the conditions of life for twice that number are deplorable. Worst off are the 47 countries we call least developed. With 10 per cent of the world's people, they have only 0.1 per cent of the world's income."

Such challenges, Mr. Speth underscored, cannot be met without continued international cooperation for development and without new and additional resources for development assistance — a fact that he said was recognized and ascribed to by essentially all governments at both the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and this year's Social Summit in Copenhagen. "But the past serves as a poor model for how we should tackle these challenges in the future," Mr. Speth said, "so a new framework for international development cooperation is required, and ODA must be reformed."

A new framework is needed, he explained, in order to broaden development cooperation — to look beyond ODA and to include trade, debt management, private investment and capital flows, access to technology, and the arms race and military expenditures. "These elements must all be made supportive of a more equitable and sustainable world, not inimical to it. Policies exist that can move in this direction; we mostly need the will to use them."

A new framework would also serve to help redefine the relationship between industrial and developing countries. "Common interests and mutual needs ought to provide the basic rationale for new partnerships through which existing imbalances and inequities can be addressed," Mr. Speth said. "Whatever today's threats to national security, more pervasive are the threats to the human security of people in their daily lives." These threats, he continued, often stem from poverty, global inequity, joblessness, environmental deterioration and social disintegration, and they can spread easily around the globe.

"Whether we like it or not, a problem in one part of the world truly affects us all," Mr Speth said. "International compacts and partnerships must therefore be forged to realize common goals, whether we are focusing on controlling the continuing devastation of the world's forests or eliminating the worst aspects of world poverty. Such compacts must be based on the realization that it is far better to act preventively than to cope with the tragic consequences of neglect."

Mr. Speth said that a new framework for development cooperation is needed to consolidate the emerging concept of sustainable people-centred development, so that people are truly the ultimate beneficiaries. He added that other aspects of a new framework could include:

- seeking new and innovative sources of finance, such as small levies on global flows of money, energy emissions and air travel. In the short term, Mr. Speth said, it could also recognize the imperative of debt relief as an alternative to increased ODA;
- recognizing that for development cooperation to succeed, it must be driven by national priorities and national ownership by countries and their peoples. The need for development cooperation to build up national capacities in government, civil society, within indigenous groups and in the private sector is of fundamental importance.

A UNDP Pilot Programme on Public-Private Partnerships Draws Attention in Geneva

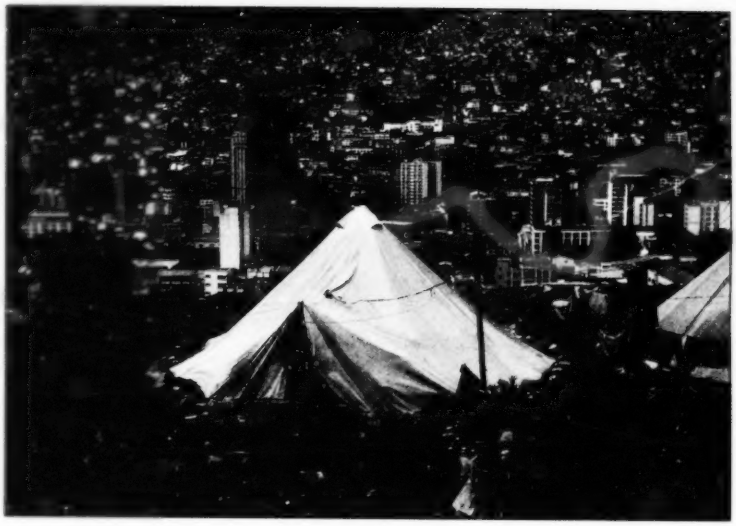
A consultation sponsored by UNDP and the Government of Switzerland on the value of public-private partnerships in remediating and preventing urban environmental problems in developing countries will lead to the formation of a large-scale project that would involve governments and development agencies.

Along with UNDP and the Swiss Government, the 5 May consultation was co-sponsored by Sustainable Project Management (SPM), a not-for-profit association based in Geneva.

Public-private partnerships are a new form of cooperation in which the dynamism, access to finance and technology and managerial skills of the private sector are combined with the social and environmental responsibilities often found in the public sector.

During the past year, UNDP, in cooperation with SPM, developed the pilot phase of the Public-Private Partnerships Programme for the Urban Environment. The consultation updated governments and other potential stakeholders on the concrete results of this initiative and provided an important forum for debate.

The objective of the initiative is to contribute to preventive and remedial solutions for urban environmental problems in the developing world by supporting the formation of "public-private" enterprises that focus on such key urban needs as proper water and sanitation services, waste management and energy schemes. Participatory approaches, capacity building, eco-efficiency and innovative financing mechanisms are also key elements of the initiative.



Population pressures are mounting in urban areas. Right, a tent-community in La Paz, Bolivia.

Urban and semi-urban areas of the developing world present alarming trends: for the first time, there will be more people living in urban than in rural areas — totalling 3.2 billion people — by the year 2000. Increasing social and environmental challenges cannot be satisfactorily met by meagre local government budgets or by traditional forms of Official Development Assistance. The approach of the Public-Private Partnership Programme was designed to spotlight local urban problems and to bring public and private sectors together to attract investment in areas not adequately targeted.

The consultation was attended by the governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the USA. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Severn Trent (UK) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (Pakistan) also participated.

Eminent Scientists Named For International Vaccine Institute Board of Trustees

Following an international search that lasted several months, UNDP has announced the formation of a 14-member Board of Trustees that will manage and steer programme development and policy at the newly-created International Vaccine Institute (IVI) in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. The Institute, which received some $600,000 from UNDP for a feasibility study for its creation, is dedicated to promoting vaccine-related development in developing countries, with a special emphasis on improving the health and immunization levels of children. The Board of Trustees, made up of eminent scientists in their respective fields from all parts of the world, is headed by Professor Barry Bloom, Chairman of Microbiology and Immunology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

Vaccines and vaccination programmes are widely recognized as being among the most cost-effective and potent weapons available to fight mor-

tality and morbidity among children in developing countries. The advent of new technologies in molecular biology and genetic engineering is expected to accelerate the pace of the development of new vaccines against childhood diseases — including diarrhoea and respiratory infections. But some vaccine producers in developing countries continue to use outmoded technologies and operate under less than ideal conditions leading to concerns about the safety and efficacy of their vaccines. Furthermore, national regulatory authorities may lack the skills to oversee effective vaccine production and use, and health systems often lack the expertise to conduct clinical trials or to monitor the quality, effectiveness and impact of intervention programmes.

Within the framework of the global Children's Vaccine Initiative, the IVI will provide assistance to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to produce quality vaccines, ensure effective regulation of their production and use, conduct clinical trials and epidemiological surveillance, and coordinate research and development for new and improved vaccines. In cooperation with WHO, UNICEF and other public and private sector agencies, the IVI will build its programmes and activities over the next several years and is expected to become fully operational by 1998.

UNDP and Economic Cooperation Organization Establish Cooperative Relations

UNDP and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) have signed a memorandum of understanding with the aim of identifying ways that the two organizations can work together to support efforts by ECO member states to promote sustainable human development programmes as well as political and economic cooperation. The event took place at the "Third ECO Summit" which was held recently in Islamabad, Pakistan. Signing on behalf of UNDP was Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmed, Associate Administrator; and on behalf of ECO, Mr. Shamshad Ahmed, Secretary-General.

The Economic Cooperation Organization, based in Teheran, is comprised of 10 member countries from the CIS and Asian regions, and currently includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The organization is pursuing programmes of cooperation among its members in such key economic and social areas as transport and communications, industry, agriculture, education, science, culture, energy, public works and narcotics control.

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